

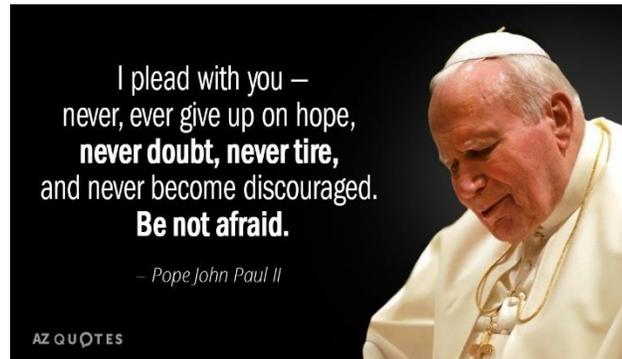
Be not afraid **What would I do if I were not afraid?**

What are you afraid of? That's an odd question to ask me now that I'm in the later half of my life. My immediate answer would probably be, "Public speaking, selling raffle tickets, or telling my wife we can't afford ...". Yet on further thought, this seems very superficial. Otherwise, why did Jesus keep reassuring the disciples, "***Do not be afraid.***" (Matt 10:31a) So maybe I need to rethink my answer.

I can remember being called a "scaredy-cat" when I was young because I wouldn't climb the tall tree over the creek. Other kids got hurt doing that. Plus, Mom told me to never, ever climb that tree. I wasn't really afraid but I trusted Mom knew what was best for me. There was the time when I was ready to go to Boot Camp and I was "nervous". I can still recall Dad saying, "Don't be afraid, son. Just do the best you can and it will work out fine." Just like Jesus did with his disciples and later with St. Paul.

So what's at the root of those things I am afraid of. Not being capable enough? Dying? Worried it's too late to try new things? Or maybe it is something else. Something we all face throughout our lives. Being afraid to try something new for fear of failing. There it is, *FEAR of failing!* We should not be afraid of failing since that is how we learn and improve.

Think about it for a moment. We have all failed many times in our lives. I'm sure you fell down the first time you tried to walk. You almost drowned the first time you tried to swim, didn't you ... but you learned to swim? Did you hit the ball the first time you swung a bat, probably not, but you swung again and again until you did? We could go on and on listing things we failed at but that is not what we need to do now ...
we need to face the FEAR of failing.



One dictionary definition of fear is it's an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or be a threat. Though there are valid examples when this is true, there are many more times when we give believability to possible events that are untrue and likely never to occur. In these cases, fear is better defined as **False Evidence Appearing Real.**

Where does this fear come from? Satan. Lies are one of Satan's weapons he uses to lead God's children into sinning. His most common lie is that God is far away and doesn't really care about us. We see how he twisted God's guidance about the tree of good and evil to deceive Adam and Eve into sinning. He tries to do that with our fear of failing, in hopes we won't try to be all God wants us to be. Who should we listen to? God or Satan? God, of course! "***God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.***" (Romans 5:5)

As we grow older, it is important that we continue striving to be all God intended us to be. We have gotten to this point in life because of God’s love. We need to accept that even though God loves us where we are, God’s love is meant to encourage us to become all we can be. To be “authentic” to ourselves and to God. That is, to be genuine or real, representing one’s true nature and beliefs.

So, what is it you would really like to do but are hesitating (fearing) to do? Is it something you’ve always wanted to do or something new? Maybe it is something God has placed on your heart and you are vacillating about doing it. If that’s the case don’t be distressed, you’re in good company.

Remember the excuses Moses gave to God about going into Egypt and talking to Pharaoh? *“O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”* (Exodus 4:10). Despite his protestations, Moses went ... and look what happened ... Israel was set free! And let’s not forget St. Paul. God reassured him several times: ***“Do not be afraid but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you.”*** (Acts 18:9–10a) As a result, most of the new testament writings, outside of the Gospels, are the result of Paul doing what he could.



“For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” (2 Tim 1:7)

Reflective Questions:

1. How have you experienced fear in the past? _____

2. What might make you afraid today? _____

3. For the moment, let’s assume you are no longer limited by your fears, what then would you feel empowered to try doing? (E.g. learning to play a musical instrument, climbing a mountain, etc.) _____

4. Do you feel God might be calling you to do something for him? If so, what? _____

Suggestion(s) for future Men’s Fellowship topics. Write them here then contact David Block at p620d124@gmail.com or text him at 619-322-7520 with your ideas.

